

Released in June 2004, *Grape Man of Texas* soon received its first international accolade when it was awarded a prestigious three stars from the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards, which recognize the finest in international food and wine books. The organization inaugurated the rating system this summer to rank the 4,000-plus books entered each year in its "Best in the World" competition. Gourmand defines these 3-star books as "masterpieces—buy and read immediately." *Grape Man*, the Gourmand press release states, is "a very important book for wine history." It is one of only four American books and 19 worldwide to be honored on the inaugural list.

The book was co-written by award-winning Texas author and historian Sherrie S. McLeroy and by Dr. Roy E. Renfro, Jr., director of the T.V. Munson Viticulture and Enology Center in Denison, Texas.—Gary L. Jennings, Librarian, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, TX, 76102-4060, U.S.A.

Preservation of the Big Thicket

JAMES J. COZINE, JR. 2004. **Saving the Big Thicket: From Exploration to Preservation, 1685–2003.** (ISBN 1-57441-175-6, hbk.). University of North Texas Press, P.O. Box 311336, Denton, TX 76203-1336, U.S.A. (Orders: 1-800-826-8911, 940-565-4590 fax, rchrisman@unt.edu, www.unt.edu/untpress). \$34.95, 272pp, 5 maps, 25 illustrations, 6" × 9".

Saving the Big Thicket. From Exploration to Preservation, 1685–2003 is the fourth in the Temple Big Thicket Series published by University of North Texas Press. Originally written by Cozine in 1976 as part of a dissertation literature entitled *Assault on a Wilderness*, the work has been updated to the present time and now includes a foreword and afterword by Pete A.Y. Gunter, author of another book in this series, *The Big Thicket: An Ecological Reevaluation*. *Saving the Big Thicket* is an account of the regional history and "play-by-play" of the political fight for the Big Thicket National Preserve (BTNP) with the after word by Gunter detailing the more recent issues in the area since Cozine's original 1976 manuscript was published.

The foreword by Gunter describes the work of the author and his involvement and perseverance on this work, presents a general construction of the book and provides some insight into the process of constructing an overview of a region with such a long and complicated history. Introductory material gives a brief description of the units that make up the preserve, general ecosystems and plant diversity found in each, along with information about the creation of the units, trails and structures. Two maps from Cozine's original work accompany this first section. Cozine divides the history of the region into six time periods of human involvement: early Native American use, French and Spanish arrival and attempted settlement, the coming of early American backwoods settlers, initiation of logging railroads (for large-scale timbering) and oil exploration, the beginning of an early conservation movement and finally the formation of the second Big Thicket Association and creation of BTNP. Each section provides great detail and historical information on the people, organizations and industries that became involved with the land, how they used it, settled it (or attempted to), helped destroy it and eventually helped save it. The first few chapters involve pre-industry human effects on the Big Thicket, outlining the Native American tribes that lived in the area leaving a minimal impact, the arrival of the Spanish and French explorers that interacted with the Native American tribes, and finally the greater impact of backwoodsmen, escaped slaves, criminals and hunters seeking refuge in the Big Thicket. The following chapters address the arrival of timber railroads, oil exploration and the incredible environmental damage to the region that came with them.

the rise and fall of the original East Texas Big Thicket Association who first raised the environmental flag in the Big Thicket and the eventual creation of the Big Thicket National Preserve with the aid of the second (and successful) Big Thicket Association in 1974. Each of these chapters is riddled with political and social struggles among the groups involved and with the tale of destruction and human impact on the region's incredible biodiversity.

Throughout the book there are a total of 5 maps from Cozine's 1976 publication. The quality of these maps is that of the original publication era and they are somewhat difficult to interpret. There is also a central section containing 19 black and white photographs from Cozine's original work. These photographs depict scenes from the early 1900's of bear hunts and early scenes in the big thicket, but the section mostly contains portraits and casual photographs of prominent politicians, activists, industry representatives and other people involved in the history of the area. These photographs are of poor quality and add little useful information or perspective to the book, besides presenting a pictorial record of the prominent figures in the Big Thicket's history.

The afterword by Gunter is a well-written account of the political, environmental and park management struggles since the creation of the park. It is a detailed account of complications that have arisen since the initial creation of the BTNP. Gunter divides this afterword into five sections addressing the bureaucratic beginnings of the park, the acquisition of new units and river property, further development of the park and facilities, and what Gunter calls a "New Big Thicket Crisis" about a struggle to add controversial new tracts of land, and finally what he calls a "postscript" introducing, but not expounding on, peripheral issues affecting the Big Thicket.

Each section discussed above ends with a set of notes and references and a thorough index makes for easy location of subjects, organizations and persons mentioned in this book. *Saving the Big Thicket* provides a well-written historical account of the Big Thicket and is a good addition to the UNT Press series on the region. This work could be useful to historians, scientific researchers, restoration project managers, students, and the casual reader alike interested in the region's complex and "entangled" history.—J. Hayley Gillespie, *University of Texas at Austin, Integrative Biology, Austin, TX 78712, U.S.A., hayleygillespie@mail.utexas.edu*